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STORAGE & DISPOSITION:

DOE Releases Draft Plan for a Defense Waste Repository

DOE-NE

December 16, 2016

The Department of Energy is evaluating the development of a repository for disposal of high-level radioactive waste resulting from atomic energy defense activities, as well as research and development activities. On December 16, 2016, the Department released a *Draft Plan for a Defense Waste Repository* for public comment. The comment period will be open for 90 days.

If you would like to provide feedback or comments on the draft plan, please email DWR@hq.doe.gov. You may also view the [Request for Public Comment in the Federal Register](#).

[>>View Draft Plan Here](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 2017

23-24

**ECA Annual Meeting
Washington, DC**

*"Meeting the New
Administration: Addressing
Community Priorities and
Securing Progress"*

[Register here](#)

NM Environment Department completes WIPP inspection

Current-Argus

December 14, 2016

The New Mexico Environment Department's Hazardous Waste Bureau Team has completed its inspection of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant facility.

A news release sent from the department indicates the results of the inspection have not yet been compiled.

The inspection focused on corrective actions taken by WIPP since a 2014 salt truck fire and unrelated radiation leak caused the facility's closure.

"Our inspections last week were to ensure that the violations cited and the corrective actions identified in NMED's 2014 Administrative Orders and Administrative Compliance Order have been fully addressed," said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Butch Tongate in the news release. "Further, all conditions of WIPP's current hazardous waste permit, under the U.S. Resource and Conservation Recovery Act which NMED enforces in New Mexico, must be met as well."

The inspection is one of the final steps in the reopening process. The Department of Energy conducted a recent review, whose results are expected to be presented at Thursday's town hall meeting. [>>Continue reading](#)

PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION:

Advocates optimistic a GOP-led DOE boosts reactors

E&E News

December 15, 2016

It's been two years since the Energy Department finalized the federal loan guarantees that made possible a nuclear expansion project in Georgia.

Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz traveled to Southern Co.'s Plant Vogtle project the following day to mark the occasion. But the project is just one of two nuclear sites currently under construction in the United States.

March 2017

5-9

Waste Management
Conference
Phoenix, AZ

[More info here](#)

May/June 2017

31-1

INVITATION ONLY

ECA Peer Exchange
Richland, WA

*"Formalizing Host
Communities' Role in the
Manhattan Project National
Historical Park"*

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Despite the DOE's loan guarantee program that Congress created in 2005 to restart the nuclear industry, a combination of cheap gas, a sluggish economy and flat electricity demand has sharply cut into a reactor project's economics.

Rick Perry, President-elect Donald Trump's pick for secretary of Energy, is now set to head the agency that maintains fuel for the nuclear industry, handles nuclear waste disposal and conducts research at national laboratories, among other things. What does a new Energy Department under Republican leadership mean for the future of an industry already in flux? [>>Continue reading](#)

Trump Energy Pick Perry Pushed to Store Nuclear Waste in His Own State

Scientific American

December 15, 2016

The ex-governor championed radioactive refuse storage in Texas, and would be in the thick of the issue as energy secretary.

Rick Perry, President-elect Donald Trump's apparent choice to become U.S. Department of Energy secretary, was known for backing oil and gas development during his 14 years as Texas governor. But Perry also championed efforts to have his state store nuclear waste—an issue that will likely occupy a big part of his agenda if he is nominated and confirmed.

The department—which Perry as a 2012 presidential candidate promised to abolish, although he famously forgot its name during a debate—is charged with the politically volatile process of developing an underground repository for highly radioactive spent fuel from commercial power plants at Nevada's Yucca Mountain, 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas. The agency has also opened a smaller underground dump in southeastern New Mexico for radioactive materials leftover from atomic bomb-making. That site has suspended storage since two 2014 accidents, irritating states such as Idaho that want their toxic trash shipped to the facility. And under Pres . Barack Obama the department has been moving ahead with developing a "consent-based" waste storage policy that does not force states to accept any waste against their residents' wishes, and if they do accept it, their residents will have a say over how it is done. The year "2017 will be a very big year when it comes to nuclear waste policy," predicted Samuel Brinton,

a senior policy analyst at the Bipartisan Policy Center think tank in Washington, D.C. [>>Continue reading](#)

Rick Perry over DOE could mean new approach for Savannah River Site, MOX

Aiken Standard

December 14, 2016

The former Texas governor who once said he wanted to do away with the Department of Energy could oversee and direct the agency's activities, which would include those at South Carolina's Savannah River Site, if confirmed under President-elect Donald Trump's administration.

Trump's transition team announced on Wednesday morning their intentions to name Gov. Rick Perry as Energy Secretary.

At the 2011 presidential debate, Perry, 66, famously forgot three federal agencies, one being the Energy Department, when he promised, if elected, to eliminate three federal agencies.

The two others were Commerce and Education.

Though Perry has been critical of some of the Energy Department's policy initiatives, such as climate change, his voting record and debate performances show a history of experience with energy regulation and legislation. That history includes strong support for cleanup of nuclear waste – a fundamental part of missions at SRS.

[>>Continue reading](#)

Murray to fight any Trump administration cutbacks at Hanford, PNNL

Tri-City Herald

December 14, 2016

Any effort to roll back progress at the Hanford nuclear reservation or to shortchange Pacific Northwest National Laboratory under the administration of President-elect Donald Trump will be met with swift opposition, said Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash.

She made the comment after Trump picked former Texas Gov. Rick Perry to head the Department of Energy.

She will oppose any move that destabilizes the Bonneville Power Administration or privatizes portions of DOE, she said.

“Washington state is home to one of the largest nuclear cleanup efforts in the world, so I cannot stress enough how critical it is to have strong, able leadership at the U.S. Department of Energy to guide the cleanup at Hanford,” she said.

The energy secretary must be committed to the nation’s legal and moral obligation to clean up contamination and waste left from World War II and Cold War nuclear defense programs, she said. More importantly, the energy secretary must be committed to the safety of its workers.

“I am also deeply troubled by Gov. Perry’s past statements regarding climate change and his obvious ties to ‘big oil’,” Murray said. [>>Continue reading](#)